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ABSTRACT

In the fall of 1993, the Nevada Department of Education conducted its third biennial survey to assess drug and alcohol attitudes and use among students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. The results of this survey are reported here. All of the state's school districts were represented by the 9,401 students participating. The survey findings are summarized according to five categories of risk factors: individual, peer, school, family, and community. Results show that regardless of grade level, alcohol is still the drug most widely used by students. More than one third of 6th graders and 8 in 10 students in 12th grade reported consuming beer, wine, or hard liquor at least once in their lifetime. However, self-reported use of alcohol dropped at all four grade levels since the last survey. This drop was not true in other areas and student responses indicate a rise in smoking. Use of other drugs, such as marijuana and inhalants, were also on the rise, although regular marijuana use is uncommon, and experimentation with cocaine is also infrequent. Findings suggest that peer factors, including peer use of substances, positive peer attitudes toward substance use, and greater reliance on peers than family, increase the risk of substance use/abuse. (RJM)

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ED 411 478

A SURVEY OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE AMONG NEVADA STUDENTS

1994

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A SURVEY OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE AMONG NEVADA STUDENTS

conducted by

The Nevada Department of Education

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in consultation with

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Nevada Department of Education

February 1994

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INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1993, the Nevada Department of Education conducted its third biennial survey to assess drug and alcohol attitudes and use among students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. The survey was first administered in the fall of 1989. The statewide survey was administered to a random sample of students at each of the four selected grade levels. Data from this year's survey will not only provide an assessment of current attitudes and use, it will also assist in planning future prevention and intervention programs and serve as comparison data for judging the impact of previous efforts.

The survey instruments used were adapted from surveys developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) prior to Nevada's 1989 survey administration. The NWREL surveys had been field-tested to ensure their appropriateness for use with the age and grade levels of participating students. The instruments had also been administered by Hawaii, Idaho, and Washington.

Two survey forms were administered. Form E, which contained 56 questions, was designed for students in grades 6 and 8. Form S, which included an additional 19 questions, was intended for students in grades 10 and 12.

METHODOLOGY

All 17 Nevada districts agreed to participate in the survey. This year, to ensure that survey results were useful at both the state and district levels, a two-step sampling procedure was used. In step one, sample sizes were determined for each district that were large enough to obtain results that could be generalized to the district's entire population at each of the grade levels surveyed. All schools with one or more of the grades to be surveyed were included in the district-level sampling frame. Districts in which the required sample size approached the total enrollment for that grade level were advised to survey all students.

The number of students to be sampled at each school within a district was determined using a software program called PCSample. A number of factors were taken into account. First, the schools were weighted by the size of the student enrollment at the targeted grade level so that representation in the district sample would be proportional to enrollment. The number of students to be contacted for participation was then adjusted upward by the average daily attendance rate and by whether the district was requiring passive or active parental consent for participation in the survey. Thus, the numbers targeted at each school were greater than the number of surveys needed to be completed at that school to take into account the impact of students being absent or not having permission to participate.

The sampling program also generated random numbers that schools used for class selection. Intact classes were surveyed rather than individual students both to minimize disruptions to the normal routine and to reassure parents that their child's class, not their child, had been selected to participate. Surveys were coded by district and grade level only.

The state sample was drawn from the available district-level surveys in step two using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) sample command in conjunction with PCSample. A minimum sample size of 1,427 students for each of

the grades studied (6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th) was originally selected in order to obtain results with less than a +/-5% margin of error for each of the grade levels separately. This figure was adjusted upward to ensure adequate representation of the smaller districts. So that the combined statewide sample would be comprised of representative proportions of students at each of the four grade levels, results were finally sought from the following:

- 3,056 sixth graders
- 2,874 eighth graders
- 2,585 tenth graders
- 2,055 twelfth graders

PCSample was used to ensure that the final random sample provided proportional representation of each district and results that accurately represented the statewide population at each of the four grade levels. This procedure yielded a slight reduction in sample size, but the number of students included in the final state sample at each grade level was still well in excess of the required minimum.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Education recommended that districts send a letter to the parents of students in the classes that were selected for participation. Each district was given a sample letter for parents which described the study and explained that participation was both voluntary and anonymous.

The Department also recommended that districts obtain the "passive consent" of parents of students selected to be surveyed. Most districts followed this procedure and assumed consent for participation if the school was not notified otherwise by the parents. Some districts chose an "active consent" strategy, which required a written release allowing the student to take the survey.

RELIABILITY

Of the original totals of students who were administered the survey at the district level, the response sheets of 178 sixth graders, 221 eighth graders, 161 tenth graders, and 113 twelfth graders were excluded because of questionable reliability. Across all four grades, this represented 3.6 percent of the 18,471 students who were surveyed. Respondents were excluded if one or more of the following conditions were evident:

. If they reported that they had answered questions "dishonestly."

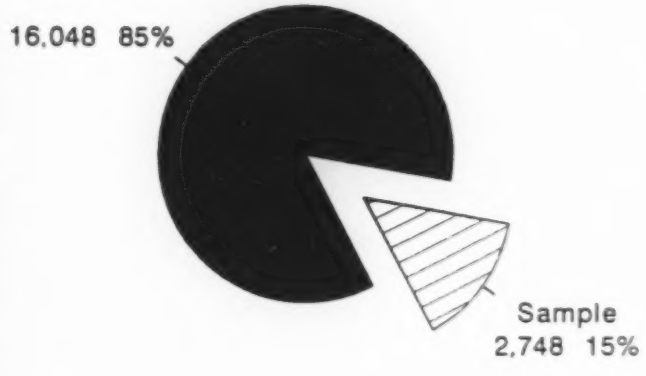
. If they reported that they regularly used a pseudo-drug called "derbisol." If students reported their use of "derbisol" was confined to "some," which equated to "at least once in my lifetime," they were not excluded because it was assumed that they might be honestly confusing the name with a real drug they had taken at one time.

. If they reported that they used more than four hard drugs daily or five times a week, including cocaine, opiates, depressants, tranquilizers, hallucinogens, inhaled substances "to get high," stimulants, steroids, and over-the-counter drugs "to feel high."

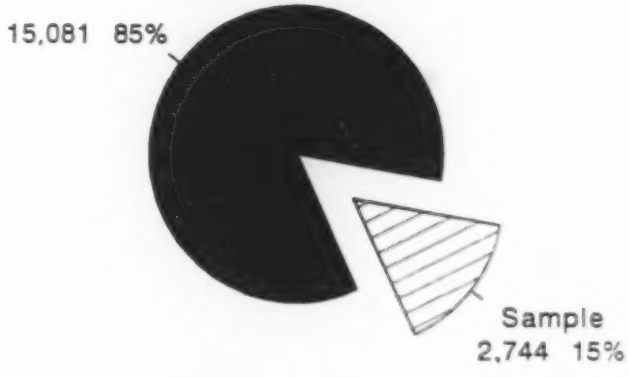
While no purely objective standards have been established in the research community for identifying unreliable responses to self-report questions about drug and alcohol use, the criteria chosen were identical to those employed in the previous administrations of the survey. Additionally, these criteria have precedent in the work of the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Figure 1 illustrates the final number of respondents by grade who made up the state sample. They include: 2,748 sixth graders, 2,744 eighth graders, 2,078 tenth graders, and 1,831 twelfth graders. Totaling 9,401 students, these samples represent approximately 14.4 percent of the population of students at these grade levels in the state.

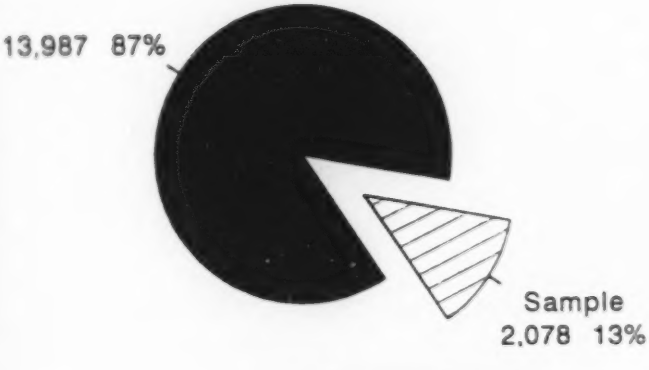
Figure 1: Survey Participants



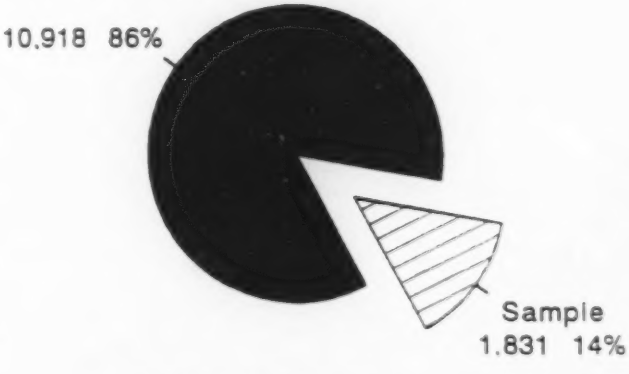
Total Enrollment
Grade 6: 18,796



Total Enrollment
Grade 8: 17,825



Total Enrollment
Grade 10: 16,065



Total Enrollment
Grade 12: 12,749

Total N = 9,401 (Approx. 14% of 65,435)

DATA ANALYSIS

Response to all survey questions has been aggregated and analyzed by grade level. Results will be reported in terms of five categories of risk factors that are generally acknowledged to place adolescents at risk for substance abuse. Such risk factors should be interpreted in the same manner as risk factors for cancer, heart or lung disease, or any other physiological disorder. That is, the greater the number of risk factors present, the greater the chance of substance abuse. However, risk factors are not causal factors. An adolescent exhibiting one or more risk factors will not necessarily become a substance abuser, but the probability is greater. As with other health disorders, the earlier factors that increase the risk of substance abuse are identified, the sooner efforts can be undertaken to modify or eliminate them, thereby reducing the likelihood of substance abuse.

In addition to determining the current levels of drug and alcohol use among Nevada students, this survey attempted to identify various factors that place Nevada students at risk for future substance use and/or abuse so that appropriate protective factors--conditions that buffer young people from the negative consequences of exposure to risk--might be implemented. Already existing protective or resiliency factors apparent from survey responses will be identified where appropriate.

Survey findings are summarized in terms of the following five categories of risk and/or protective factors:

- individual
- peer
- school
- family
- community

Response to survey questions will be discussed under the appropriate category, with items appearing in more than one category when necessary.

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Among the individual factors that increase the risk of substance use/abuse are:

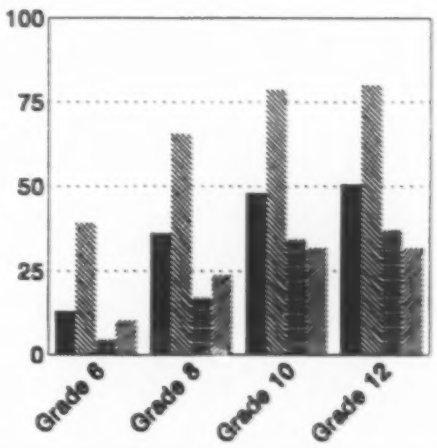
- **Antisocial behavior and hyperactivity**
- **Alienation and rebelliousness**
- **Positive attitudes toward substance use**
- **Early first use of substances**
- **Other high-risk behaviors (e.g., gang membership)**

The presence or absence of these factors in the students surveyed will be presented in terms of four general classifications of substances--alcohol, tobacco, other gateway drugs such as marijuana and cocaine, and other drugs. The term gateway drugs refers to those drugs people are first exposed to and experiment with. Traditional gateway drugs are alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and increasingly, cocaine. The significance of gateway drugs is that most people with a drug dependency began their cycle of addiction by experimenting with a gateway drug. While not everyone who tries alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana

becomes addicted to drugs, most addicts began their habits with one of these drugs.

The general classifications of tobacco, alcohol, other gateway drugs, and other drugs referred to above were created by combining the responses to questions regarding specific forms of these substances. Figure 2 displays self-reported substance use by grade level.

Figure 2: Self-Reported Substance Use



Tobacco	12.9	36.1	47.9	50.4
Alcohol	39.2	65.7	78.6	80.1
Gateway Drugs	4.7	17.3	34.5	37.2
Other Drugs	10.3	23.8	31.9	31.9

Tobacco Alcohol
Gateway Drugs Other Drugs

* Numbers denote percentages.

Survey questions dealing with use of specific substances, perceptions of use by friends, source and/or availability of the substances, and attitudes regarding the risk associated with using them will be discussed for each category of substances. Comparisons between this year's survey response and that on the previous surveys that were conducted in 1989 and 1991 will be made where possible. Changes or differences reported are significant at the .05 level.

Alcohol Use

Alcohol continues to be the major drug of choice among youth in Nevada; however, use has declined at all four grade levels surveyed. A significant decline occurred at grade six, where 39.2 percent of students report having consumed beer, wine, or hard liquor at least once in their lifetime, compared with 42.9 percent in 1991. Tenth graders posted a significant decline as well, with lifetime use dropping from 81.4 percent to 78.6 percent. Eighth graders, whose use went down from 66.7 percent in 1991 to 65.7 percent this year, registered only a slight decrease; while a meaningful, and nearly significant drop (from 82.6% to 80.1%) was seen at grade twelve.

Two individual attributes that appear to be related to alcohol use are self-esteem and educational aspirations. Students who demonstrated high levels of these resiliency characteristics were less likely to report experimentation. At grades 6, 8, and 10, students who felt good about themselves were significantly less likely to have experimented with alcohol than their counterparts with lower self-esteem, although the relationship diminished by grade level and was no longer apparent by grade 12. High educational aspirations appear to serve an even greater protective function. Regardless of grade level, students who anticipated graduating from a four-year college were significantly less likely to have experimented with alcohol than students who didn't plan to get a college degree. However, only students who believed that they definitely would graduate from college demonstrated lower lifetime alcohol use than their grade cohort as a whole.

Differences in alcohol use among the five major ethnic groups were apparent at each grade level surveyed; however, only at grade 8, where 77.8 percent of Hispanic students reported lifetime use of alcohol compared with 65.7 percent use for eighth graders in general, was the difference significant. At grade 6, boys were significantly more likely than girls to report having tried alcohol. This pattern was reversed at grades 8 and 10, where use among girls was significantly higher. By grade 12, when approximately 80 percent of students report having used alcohol at least once, there is no significant difference in the responses of males and females. Use of specific forms of alcohol can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE 1: BEER, WINE, & HARD LIQUOR USE
Percentage by Grade

	Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Beer	36.8	31.9	26.2	58.3	55.2	51.6	73.0	71.8	67.1	80.6	74.4	70.0
Wine	37.9	33.0	30.1	61.3	57.3	55.7	74.2	73.2	68.5	80.6	73.6	70.1
Hard Liquor	14.7	12.7	10.6	38.8	37.7	37.7	61.1	59.0	57.8	71.5	66.2	61.6

The downward trend in drinking all forms of alcohol that was evident in 1991 has continued. Self-reported use of beer decreased significantly at all four grade levels surveyed. Likewise, wine use declined at all levels, significantly at grades 6, 10, and 12. Use of hard liquor decreased significantly at grades 6 and 12, remained unchanged at grade 8, and dropped slightly at grade 10. Decreases since the 1991 survey range from 1.2 to 5.7 percentage points.

Self-reported use of wine exceeds that of beer or hard liquor at all four grade levels this year, with percentages of students reporting at least experimental use ranging from 30.1 percent at grade 6 to 70.1 percent at grade 12. This pattern was apparent in grades 6, 8, and 10 in past years, but use of beer by twelfth graders had previously equaled or exceeded their use of wine.

Regular drinking of beer and wine (monthly, weekly, or daily) is far less prevalent than lifetime use, but steady increases are seen with grade level. Percentages of students reporting regular drinking of beer range from 2.4 percent at grade 6 to 33.9 percent at grade 12, while those for regular wine drinking range from 2.7 percent at grade 6 to 22.9 percent at grade 12.

At grades 10 and 12, no significant difference in lifetime use of beer is apparent between males and females, but males are more likely to report regular beer drinking. On the other hand, females are significantly more likely than males to report experimentation with wine, but regular use is similar for both groups.

Sixth grade students once again perceived less use of alcohol (beer, wine, or hard liquor) among their friends (32.2%) than the self-reported figures indicate (39.2%), while students at grades 8, 10, and 12 continued to overestimate use among friends.

Early first use of substances is considered a risk factor for later substance abuse. Conversely, delaying the onset of first use can be considered a protective factor. Tables 2 and 3 present comparative data regarding the age at which students remember having had their first full drink.

TABLE 2: AGE OF FIRST FULL DRINK
Grades 6 & 8

	Grade 6			Grade 8		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Never	60.9	64.8	70.5	33.1	36.9	39.6
9 or younger	17.6	15.3	12.8	18.3	17.6	15.8
10	10.0	9.7	7.8	11.6	10.1	9.6
11	8.7	7.8	6.7	12.4	10.1	11.5
12 or older	2.8	2.3	2.2	24.6	25.3	23.5

Numbers denote percentages.

The percentage of students who report having had a full drink at least once in their lifetime increases with grade level from 29.5 percent at grade 6 to 81.1 percent at grade 12. The greatest increase occurs between grade 6 and grade 8.

In the two years since the last administration of the survey, the percentages of 6th and 8th grade students who report having had their first full drink at age 9 or younger have decreased by 2.5 points and 1.8 points, respectively. Both decreases exceed those registered between the 1989 and 1991 administrations of the survey, but only the one at grade 6 is significant.

TABLE 3: AGE OF FIRST FULL DRINK
Grades 10 & 12

	Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Never	16.9	19.1	21.9	9.4	16.4	18.9
10 or younger	21.3	16.6	17.9	16.9	14.1	13.9
11 or 12	23.6	23.0	22.3	19.1	17.6	15.4
13 or 14	29.0	32.3	29.2	28.4	25.6	25.6
15 or older	9.1	9.0	8.7	26.2	26.3	26.1

Numbers denote percentages.

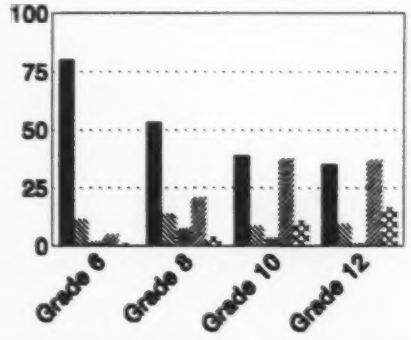
A slight decrease of 0.2 point was seen in the percentage of 12th grade students who report having had their first full drink by age 10 or younger; however, the percentage of 10th grade students who claim to have had their first full drink before age 10 has increased by 1.3 points.

At grades 6 and 8, most students who drink report that they usually drink less than one can or glass at a time. The most frequent quantity of alcohol consumed at one time jumps to 2-4 cans/glasses in grades 10 and 12. Slightly lower percentages of high school students indicate that they usually drink 5 or more cans/glasses at a time, and 23.3 percent of 10th graders and 27.9 percent of 12th graders report having had 5 or more drinks in a row in the two weeks preceding the survey. Both of these percentages reflect significant decreases from the 1991 survey when 27.8 percent of 10th graders and 31.5 percent of 12th graders reported such "binge drinking."

Approximately 44 percent of the 10th and 12th graders who self-reported current drinking indicated that there had been a period in their life when they drank more than they do now. Almost 39 percent of 10th graders and exactly 50 percent of 12th graders admitted that this was true for them. American Indian students were overrepresented among students reporting this behavior at both grade levels; this was also true for White students at grade 12. No differences were evident for males and females.

Using drugs and alcohol together was reported by 22.9 percent of 10th graders, up from 20.2 percent in 1991, and 27.7 percent of 12th graders, compared with 27.5 percent two years ago. Neither of these increases was significant. In both years, more than half of the students who reported this practice indicated that they had done it just once or twice.

Figure 3: Usual Source of Alcohol Percentage by Grade



Don't drink	80	53.2	38.9	35.1
Home-P*	11.8	14	8.9	9.8
Home-U*	2.2	7.9	3.7	1.3
Friends	5	20.9	37.6	37.1
Ask adult buy/self	1	4	10.9	16.8

Don't drink | Home-P* | Home-U* | Friends | Ask adult buy/self

* P = Parents know, U = Parents unaware

Numbers denote percentages.

Figure 3 shows the usual source of alcohol for students who drink. More than half of the sixth graders who drink (58.9%) report that they usually get their alcoholic beverages from home with parental knowledge, while students who drink at the other three grade levels most frequently listed "friends" as their usual source of alcoholic beverages. These response patterns have remained consistent over the three survey administrations, although the overall percentage of students who drink continues to decline. Table 4 presents comparative data regarding students' perceptions of the risks involved in having five or more drinks once or twice each weekend.

TABLE 4: RISK INVOLVED IN HAVING 5+ DRINKS ONCE OR TWICE EACH WEEKEND						
	Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
No risk	5.5	4.9	5.3	5.0	4.9	5.9
Slight risk	19.0	16.2	18.1	20.8	18.6	16.1
Moderate risk	36.4	32.6	33.6	38.3	36.0	35.9
Great risk	33.2	36.5	36.2	32.7	33.4	37.4
Not sure	5.8	9.3	6.8	3.3	6.2	4.7

Numbers denote percentages.

Approximately 71 percent of students in grades 10 and 12 believe that people are taking a "moderate" or "great" risk by having five or more drinks once or twice each weekend. About 17 percent more perceive "slight" risk in this activity, and another 6 percent are "not sure." Only 5.6 percent of 10th and 12th graders claim there is "no risk" involved in this level of drinking, yet approximately 25 percent confess to having engaged in this sort of "binge drinking" one or more times in the two weeks prior to the survey. No significant changes have occurred in the perceived harmfulness of "binge drinking" since the last survey administration, although a slightly larger percentage of students in grades 10 and 12 believe there is moderate or great risk in this practice.

A comparison of the self-reported "binge drinking" habits of students in grades 10 and 12 with their beliefs about its dangers reveals that the greater students' perception of risk, the less likely they are to engage in this practice. At grade 10, for example, 57.2 percent of the students who see no risk in binge drinking report having had 5 or more drinks in a row in the two weeks preceding the survey, while only 10.3 percent of students who see great risk in the practice report this level of drinking in the two weeks prior to the survey. Binge drinking is slightly more prevalent at grade 12, but the relationship between perceived risk and behavior remains the same: 61.9 percent of the students who see "no risk" report recent binge drinking compared with 11.0 percent of the students who see "great risk."

Students who perceived that their parents would "greatly disapprove" of their having one or two drinks nearly every day, having five or more drinks once or twice each weekend, and attending a party in a private home where alcoholic beverages were available were significantly less likely to have tried alcohol.

Tobacco Use

Although use of tobacco is less prevalent among Nevada students than alcohol use, the percentage of students who report at least experimental tobacco use

climbs steadily from 12.9 percent at grade 6 to 50.4 percent at grade 12. Smoking continues to attract far more students than chewing tobacco, especially as students move into the higher grades. By grade twelve, 14.1 percent of students report smoking on a daily basis, while only 3.2 percent report using chewing tobacco this frequently.

No significant changes in tobacco use are apparent since 1991; however, lifetime use has decreased somewhat at grade 6, dropped slightly at grades 10 and 12, and increased at grade 8. The increase at grade 8 can be attributed to a jump of nearly 10 percent in cigarette smoking, since the use of chewing tobacco registered a decline at that grade level.

Differing patterns of tobacco use among students in the five major ethnic groups were evident at grades 8, 10, and 12. At all three of these grade levels, Black students were significantly less likely to report use than students in general, while use was above average for American Indian and White students at all three grades and for Hispanic students at grade 10. Across all grade levels, males were significantly more likely than females to report lifetime tobacco use. This year's prevalence rates for smoking are compared with those from previous years in Table 5.

TABLE 5: FREQUENCY OF SMOKING TOBACCO
1989 - 1993

	Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Never	87.6	89.9	91.0	71.0	71.0	68.2	59.3	57.4	56.7	50.7	55.2	54.8
Some	10.5	8.1	6.8	19.2	18.8	20.0	23.2	23.6	23.0	26.7	23.1	24.6
Monthly	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.1	2.6	3.6	3.2	4.6	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.6
Weekly	0.5	0.4	0.6	1.6	2.3	2.2	2.1	3.4	3.2	2.7	3.9	3.0
Daily	0.6	0.6	0.6	5.0	5.3	6.0	12.2	11.0	13.6	16.1	14.0	14.1

Numbers denote percentages.

Since the 1991 survey administration, the percentage of Nevada students who have experimented with cigarettes has dropped somewhat at grade 6, has risen slightly at grades 10 and 12, and has increased significantly at grade 8. Similarly, daily smoking has remained unchanged at grade 6 but risen at all three other grades. The only significant increase in daily smoking occurred at grade 10.

Even with these increases, self-reported tobacco use continues to fall well below students' perception of friends' use at all grade levels. The discrepancy between perceived use and self-reported use increases with grade level and ranges from

12.7 percentage points at grade 6 to 28.7 percentage points at grade 12. This pattern was apparent in previous years but, since smoking was decreasing, seemed to be an effect of slow-to-change norms regarding the prevalence of adolescent smoking. This year, with smoking up at all grades but sixth, the even larger discrepancies may indeed confirm the unwelcome reversal of a downward trend in adolescent smoking.

Contrary to what might be expected, given the increases in smoking at grades 10 and 12, student perceptions of the risks involved in smoking have remained unchanged at grade 10 and have increased at grade 12. Approximately 83 percent of 10th graders and 87 percent of 12th graders believe there is "moderate" or "great" risk in smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day, and less than 2 percent at each grade level see "no risk" in this activity. While students who perceive "great risk" in smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day are less likely to smoke than the average student at their grade level, merely holding this perception does not seem to offer sufficient protection, for some 38 percent of these students still report lifetime use of cigarettes.

Use of Other Gateway Drugs

Nevada students' use of marijuana and cocaine, which like alcohol and tobacco are often classified as gateway drugs, has traditionally been low, but regular increases have been apparent with grade level. This year, 4.7 percent of 6th graders report having used marijuana or cocaine at least once in their lifetime. By 8th, 10th, and 12th grades, self-reported use has increased to 17.3 percent, 34.5 percent, and 37.2 percent, respectively. When these figures are compared with those from the 1991 administration of the survey, significant increases in use are evident at grades 6, 8, and 10, and a non-significant decline in use is seen at grade 12.

Significant differences can be observed in the patterns of gateway drug use among students in the various ethnic groups. At grade 6, Black and Hispanic students are more likely to have tried gateway drugs than 6th graders in general, while White students are somewhat less likely to report experimentation. By grade 8, use is well above average for Hispanic and American Indian students and has dropped below average for Black and Asian students as well as for White students. At grade 10, Hispanic and American Indian students are still considerably more likely than average to report lifetime use, and Asian students are least likely to report use. American Indian students continue to demonstrate a higher than average rate of gateway drug use at grade 12, Black and White students also report slightly above average rates of experimentation at this level, and Asian students continue to report far less than average use.

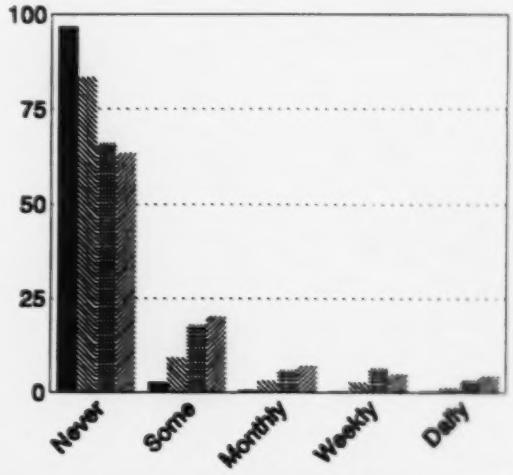
The only difference evident between male and female patterns of experimentation with gateway drugs occurs at grade 6, where boys are significantly more likely than girls to have tried a gateway drug. From the information pertaining to use of the two individual substances being classified as gateway drugs which follows, it is clear that marijuana use is still far more common than use of cocaine.

Marijuana Use

Marijuana experimentation among Nevada students continues to begin later than experimentation with alcohol or tobacco, but since the 1991 administration of the

survey, lifetime use has increased at all grade levels. The percentage of students who report having used marijuana "at least once in my lifetime" has increased significantly at grades 6, 8, and 10, while regular use (monthly, weekly, or daily) has risen at all four grade levels and has shown significant increases at grades 8, 10, and 12. Figure 4 displays current levels of use by grade.

Figure 4: Marijuana Use



Grade 6	96.7	2.6	0.4	0.2	0.1
Grade 8	83.5	9.3	3.1	2.8	1.2
Grade 10	66	17.9	6.1	6.6	3.4
Grade 12	63.3	20.3	7.1	4.8	4.5

Grade 6 Grade 8 Grade 10 Grade 12

Numbers denote percentages.

Even with the increases noted above, almost 97 percent of sixth grade students have never tried marijuana. This percentage declines to 83.5 percent at grade 8, to 66.0 percent at grade 10, and to 63.3 percent at grade 12. Among those students who have used marijuana, the majority continue to report experimental use ("at least once in my lifetime") as opposed to regular use (monthly, weekly, or daily), although regular use is on the rise. Table 6 compares this year's 10th and 12th graders' perceptions of the risk involved in occasional marijuana with those from 1989 and 1991.

TABLE 6: RISK FROM OCCASIONAL MARIJUANA USE
Percentage by Grade

	Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
No risk	3.2	4.8	6.7	3.2	4.9	8.2
Slight risk	12.2	13.6	19.8	15.7	16.9	19.2
Moderate risk	34.9	32.5	32.5	37.0	34.9	34.5
Great risk	43.3	39.0	34.0	40.0	35.0	33.5
Not sure	6.4	10.0	7.0	4.2	8.3	4.7

Numbers denote percentages.

Approximately 67 percent of 10th graders and 68 percent of 12th graders believe there is "moderate" or "great" risk in occasional marijuana use. Both of these figures have dropped significantly from 1991 when 72 percent of 10th graders and 70 percent of 12th graders perceived risk in marijuana use. This shift in perception is cause for concern, since there is a significant relationship between students' perception of the dangers associated with the use of drugs and their self-reported levels of use. Students in grades 10 and 12 who believed there was "moderate" or "great" risk in occasional marijuana use were more than five times as likely to abstain from using as were students who saw "no risk" or "slight risk" in occasional use.

Nevada students' beliefs regarding how difficult it would be for them to get marijuana change dramatically as grade level increases. At grade six, 83.0 percent of students believe it is probably "impossible" or "difficult" (very or fairly) for them to get marijuana, while only 17.1 percent think it would be "fairly easy" or "very easy" to get. By grade 12, these figures have essentially reversed themselves, for 80.7 percent of students think it would be "fairly easy" or "very easy" for them to get marijuana, and only 19.2 percent think it would probably be difficult or impossible.

The overall pattern of student perception regarding the availability of marijuana has remained relatively stable since the 1989 administration of the survey. Each year the percentages of students who say it would be "very easy" or "fairly easy" for them to get marijuana climbs steadily with grade level. This year, however, with the exception of grade 6, a larger proportion of students said marijuana was easy to get.

The variations in marijuana use apparent among students in different ethnic and gender groups are similar to those noted for gateway drugs in general. Black and Hispanic students were more likely to begin experimentation with marijuana earlier than their counterparts in other ethnic groups, American Indian students maintained a higher than average rate of use throughout the three higher grades,

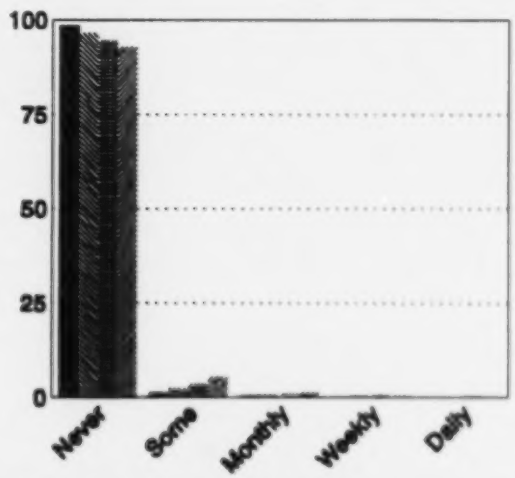
and Asian students were least likely to report marijuana use at any grade level. Boys were significantly more likely than girls to report marijuana use at grade 6; however, by grade 8 gender differences were no longer apparent. These differences reappeared at grades 10 and 12, where males once again reported significantly higher levels of use than females.

Positive self-esteem and high educational aspirations appear to serve an even greater protective function against marijuana use than was noted with alcohol. Regardless of grade level, students who felt good about themselves and students who planned to graduate from college were significantly less likely to have tried marijuana than students who did not hold these beliefs.

Cocaine Use

Cocaine experimentation, including experimentation with crack, is fairly rare among Nevada students, and regular use is quite uncommon. Self-reported levels of use at each of the four grade levels surveyed are graphically displayed in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Cocaine Use



Grade 6	98.5	1.1	0.3	0	0.1
Grade 8	96.7	2.4	0.6	0.3	0.1
Grade 10	94.6	3.6	1	0.6	0.3
Grade 12	92.8	5.4	1.3	0.3	0.2

Grade 6 Grade 8 Grade 10 Grade 12

Numbers denote percentages.

The percentage of students who have never tried cocaine ranges from 98.5 percent at grade 6 to 92.8 percent at grade 12. When these figures are compared with those from the 1991 administration of the survey, slight increases in cocaine experimentation are evident at grades 6, 8, and 10, and a decrease in lifetime use is apparent at grade 12. None of these changes is significant, however.

TABLE 7: RISK FROM TRYING COCAINE ONCE OR TWICE
Percentage by Grade

	Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
No risk	2.2	2.9	2.9	2.0	2.6	3.7
Slight risk	9.2	9.1	12.0	8.7	10.3	9.1
Moderate risk	21.7	20.7	24.8	22.2	19.7	21.8
Great risk	59.8	55.5	51.5	62.5	58.0	59.8
Not sure	7.3	11.8	8.8	4.6	9.3	5.6

Numbers denote percentages.

Table 7 summarizes 10th and 12th graders' perceptions of the risk involved in trying cocaine once or twice. Unlike their beliefs about the risks associated with marijuana use, Nevada students currently perceive more risk in using cocaine than they did in 1991.

Most sixth graders (88.4%) believe that it would probably be "impossible" or "difficult" (very or fairly) for them to get cocaine. While older students perceive progressively greater availability, the majority of twelfth graders (53.7%) still indicate that obtaining cocaine would be impossible or difficult. Changes registered since the 1991 survey indicate that cocaine is presently more difficult to obtain at grade 6, but somewhat easier for students to get at grades 8, 10, and 12.

Use of Other Drugs

At grades 6 and 8, the percentage of students who report experimentation with "other drugs" (17%) continues to exceed the percentage who report use of the so-called gateway drugs marijuana and cocaine (11%). At grades 10 and 12, however, gateway drug use (35.7%) clearly surpasses that for "other drugs" (31.9%).

Significant ethnic and gender differences in lifetime use of "other drugs" do not emerge until grade 8. At that level, and continuing on into 10th grade, girls are

significantly more likely than boys to report having tried "other drugs," and use by students from American Indian or Hispanic backgrounds is more likely than by students from other ethnic groups. By grade 12, boys are slightly more likely than girls to report use of "other drugs," and use by White and American Indian students exceeds the average rate for the grade as a whole. Asian and Black students are least likely to have tried "other drugs" at grades 8, 10, and 12.

Self-reported lifetime use of eight categories of other drugs from this year's survey is compared with data from 1991 in Table 8.

TABLE 8: USE OF SPECIFIC OTHER DRUGS
1989 - 1993

	Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Opiates	1.6	1.2	1.1	4.0	2.9	3.1	7.0	5.5	5.5	8.6	6.9	6.9
Depressants	1.5	1.4	1.3	5.3	3.7	4.6	7.0	6.6	6.5	6.7	6.0	5.8
Tranquilizers	1.8	1.3	1.3	4.7	4.1	3.9	7.2	6.4	6.3	8.3	6.7	6.9
Hallucinogens	1.5	1.1	1.7	4.4	4.3	6.1	10.3	11.8	12.8	13.6	15.3	15.5
Inhaled Sub.	3.6	2.9	4.8	9.9	10.2	15.2	13.2	15.0	19.2	13.9	12.0	14.5
Stimulants	1.1	1.1	1.2	5.7	3.6	6.2	14.0	9.7	11.8	20.2	12.1	13.9
Steroids	2.0	1.4	2.1	2.9	2.4	2.4	3.1	2.8	2.5	3.8	3.5	2.9
O-T-C Drugs	3.3	2.6	2.8	8.2	7.2	8.4	11.8	11.1	11.1	11.5	10.1	10.0

Numbers denote percentages.

With the exception of substances inhaled to get high, which saw a significant increase since the last survey, use of "other drugs" is still rare among Nevada students in grade 6, but it climbs slowly as students move into the higher grades. At grade 8, where levels of "other drug" use have typically ranged from 2 to 10 percent, significant increases were seen in the use of hallucinogens such as LSD, PCP, and magic mushrooms; inhalants; and stimulants such as amphetamines, dexedrine, and speed. Tenth graders also registered a significant increase in the use of stimulants, and inhalant use rose significantly at both 10th and 12th grades.

The pattern of "other drug" use that emerged two years ago, which saw use of inhalants and over-the-counter drugs peaking at grade 10 and declining by grade

12, continues to hold true; however, the rise in inhalant use among younger students several years ago has contributed to increases in the percentages of students who now report lifetime use of inhalants at grades 10 and 12. Furthermore, regular use of inhalants (monthly, weekly, daily), which has traditionally been highest at grade 8, is now reported by a comparable percentage of 10th graders.

Tables 9 and 10 compare students' current perceptions regarding the risks involved in heroin experimentation and borrowed needle use with those from the 1991 administration of the survey.

TABLE 9: PERCEIVED RISK FROM TRYING HEROIN ONCE OR TWICE
Percentage by Grade

	Grade 10		Grade 12	
	1991	1993	1991	1993
No risk	2.9	3.2	2.7	3.1
Slight risk	11.0	14.4	9.4	10.1
Moderate risk	22.6	24.5	20.0	23.5
Great risk	50.7	48.3	57.6	56.2
Not sure	12.7	9.6	10.3	7.1

Numbers denote percentages.

TABLE 10: PERCEIVED RISK FROM BORROWED NEEDLE USE
Percentage by Grade

	Grade 10		Grade 12	
	1991	1993	1991	1993
No risk	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.8
Slight risk	1.9	1.1	1.2	0.9
Moderate risk	3.3	3.3	2.7	2.8
Great risk	78.2	86.6	82.7	88.8
Not sure	13.8	6.9	10.6	5.7

Numbers denote percentages.

More than three-fourths of Nevada students in grades 10 and 12 see "moderate" or "great" risk in trying heroin once or twice, while approximately 3 percent see "no risk" in this activity. Borrowed needle use is seen as even more dangerous, with 9 out of 10 students recognizing the inherent risks, and less than 2 percent claiming that "no risk" is involved. Levels of perceived risk for both practices increase with grade level.

Nevada students continue to believe that "other drugs" would be more difficult for them to get than marijuana, but they would not be as difficult to get as cocaine. They also continue to greatly overestimate their friends' use of "other drugs." At grades 10 and 12, where 32 percent of students self-report use of "other drugs," 62 percent of students allege use among their friends.

Approximately 23 percent of 10th graders and 28 percent of 12th graders report that they have used drugs and alcohol together. For 10th graders, this represents 37.8 percent of the students who acknowledge drinking or using. For 12th graders, it equals 43.3 percent of those who drink or use. Both of these percentages reflect increases from the last survey, but only the one at grade 10 is significant.

PEER FACTORS

Among the peer factors that increase the risk of substance use/abuse are:

- **Peer use of substances**
- **Positive peer attitudes toward substance use**
- **Greater reliance on peers than family**
- **Lack of positive peer involvement**

Many Nevada students are aware of drinking and drug problems among their friends. Table 11 shows the extent of this situation.

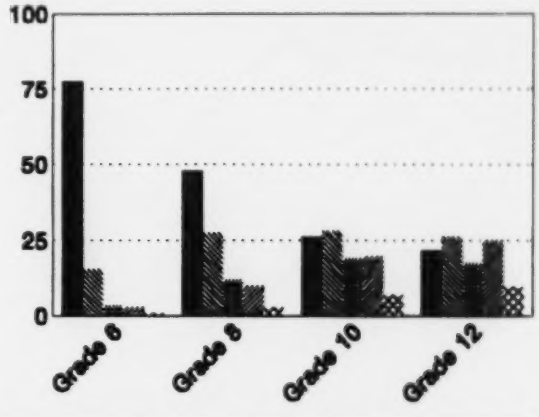
TABLE 11: DRUG OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AMONG FAMILY & FRIENDS
Percentage by Grade

	No One	Someone at Home	A Friend	Both Someone at Home and a Friend
Grade 6	67.5	12.5	15.1	5.0
Grade 8	53.0	8.6	30.5	7.9
Grade 10	43.0	6.1	40.3	10.5
Grade 12	40.8	7.2	42.8	9.1

Numbers denote percentages.

One out of five Nevada sixth graders (20.1%) reports having a friend with a drinking or drug problem. This figure climbs steadily with grade level, and by grade 12 more than half (51.9%) of students indicate that at least one of their friends has such a problem. Figure 6 displays the extent of alcohol use that students perceive among their friends.

Figure 6: Number of Close Friends Who Use Alcohol At Least Monthly



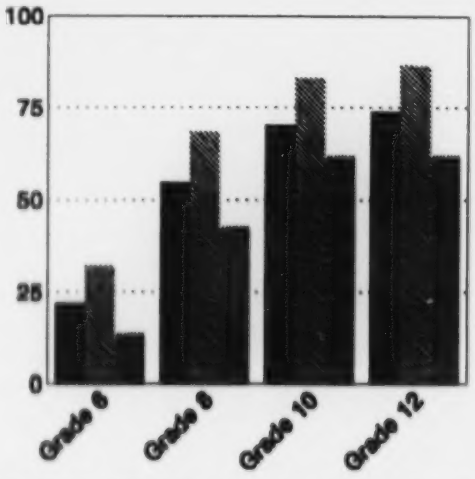
None	77.5	47.9	26.1	21.6
A Few	15.5	27.5	28.1	26.2
Some	3.4	12.2	19.2	17.6
Most	2.8	9.9	19.8	25.1
All	0.8	2.6	6.9	9.6

None A Few Some Most All

Numbers denote percentages.

Nearly one out of every four Nevada sixth graders (22.5%) reports having friends who drink at least monthly. As grade level increases, this proportion rises dramatically to more than half (52.1%) at grade 8, to almost three-fourths (73.9%) at grade 10, and to 78.4 percent at grade 12. With the exception of grade 6, these figures are down from last year, coinciding with this year's significant drop in self-reported alcohol use. Perceptions of friends' lifetime use of alcohol, along with their perceived use of tobacco and other drugs, can be seen in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Perception of Friends' Use Of Tobacco/Alcohol/Other Drugs



Tobacco	21.8	54.6	70.1	73.8
Alcohol	32.2	68.5	83.1	86.5
Other Drugs	13.5	42.8	61.9	62.1

Tobacco Alcohol Other Drugs

Numbers denote percentages.

Perception of friends' use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs continues to differ considerably from self-reported levels of use, suggesting either that students are under-reporting their own use or that the prevailing norms are inaccurate regarding the extent of drinking, smoking, and drug use by their peers.

- At grade 6, there is more use of alcohol and less use of tobacco and other drugs than students believe.
- At grades 8, 10, and 12, there is less use of all three substances than students believe.

Nevertheless, there is a significant relationship between perceived levels of use among friends and self-reported use. The greater the frequency of perceived use among friends, the more likely students are to report that they have tried a particular substance. At grades 8, 10, and 12, this holds true for tobacco, for alcohol, and for all other drugs. Peer influence does not appear to be as strong at grade 6, and the relationship between perceived friends' use and self-reported use is somewhat inconsistent.

"Friends" are the primary source of alcoholic beverages for the majority of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders, while most 6th graders who drink say they usually get their alcoholic beverages from home--with their parents' knowledge. Friends also become an increasingly important source of drug and alcohol information as grade level increases.

Positive peer involvement appears to serve a protective function for students in grades 8, 10, and 12. Students who report participation in one or more extra school activities or non-school activities are significantly less likely to report use of alcohol, tobacco, gateway drugs, or other drugs than students who take part in no activities. The protection seems to be strengthened with each of the first three activities reported but is slightly reduced when the number of activities exceeds three. Once again, peer influence is evidently not yet firmly established at grade 6, and participating in positive activities with peers has little bearing on lifetime substance use.

SCHOOL FACTORS

Among the school factors that increase the risk of substance use/abuse are:

- **School management problems**
- **Poor school performance**
- **Availability of substances**
- **Lack of commitment to school**
- **Lack of school involvement**

Response to four survey items concerning school-related demographics yielded the following school profile of respondents:

- A total of 13.5 percent of student respondents across all four grades reported that they had repeated a grade in school. Students in grades six (14.1%) and eight (14.9%) were considerably more likely to report being held back than were students in grade ten (11.6%) or twelve (12.6%).

- Over 90 percent of sixth grade respondents reported that they miss no more than two to three days of school a semester. The amount of school missed increases substantially with grade level, and by grade twelve, 37.6 percent of students admit that they miss some school every week or month.

- Student perception of the likelihood of college graduation decreases with grade level. Almost 90 percent of 6th graders say they "probably" or "definitely" will graduate from a four-year college. By 12th grade, only 82.5 percent of students express this level of certainty.

- Regular participation in extracurricular activities is highest at grade 12 (72.2%) and lowest at grade 8 (64.9%).

Examining the self-reported alcohol, tobacco, and drug use patterns of students relative to these school-related risk/resiliency factors reveals that grade level

plays an important part in determining each factor's significance. At grades 6 and 8, students who performed poorly in school (repeating a grade) were significantly more likely to report use of all four classifications of substances (tobacco, alcohol, gateway drugs, and other drugs) as students who had never been held back. At grade 10, this relationship held true only for gateway and other drugs, and by grade 12, no meaningful relationships were apparent.

School attendance and anticipated college graduation were both significantly related to use of all four types of substances at all four grade levels. The less school students missed, the less likely they were to report having used a substance. At grade 12, for example, students who missed some school every week or month were twice as likely to report having tried gateway or other drugs as students who missed no more than two to three days a semester. Similarly, students who planned to complete college were significantly less likely to report any sort of experimentation than students who had no such aspirations.

School involvement, as demonstrated by self-reported participation in extracurricular activities, had little relationship to substance use at grade 6. At grades 8, 10, and 12, however, students who took part in one or more extra school activities were significantly less likely to report lifetime use of alcohol, tobacco, gateway drugs, or other drugs than students who were involved in no activities. As noted under peer factors, the protective nature of this participation seems to be strengthened by additional activities up to a maximum of three.

School factors more directly associated with substance use include perceived and actual use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs on school campuses and by students. Table 12 compares current perceptions regarding drug and alcohol use on campus with those from previous years.

TABLE 12: STUDENT PERCEPTION OF DRUG/ALCOHOL USE ON CAMPUS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY 1989 - 1993

	Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Yes	21.7	19.0	29.1	52.0	44.5	50.9	75.7	73.8	76.8	79.7	75.9	77.5
No	78.3	81.0	70.9	48.0	55.5	49.1	24.3	26.2	23.2	22.2	24.1	22.5

Numbers denote percentages.

By high school, more than three-fourths of students believe there is alcohol or drug use on their campus by students during the school day. Moreover, the percentage of students who report this has increased at every grade level since the 1991 survey--significantly at grades 6, 8, and 10. Table 13 presents comparative data on self-reported substance use at high schools.

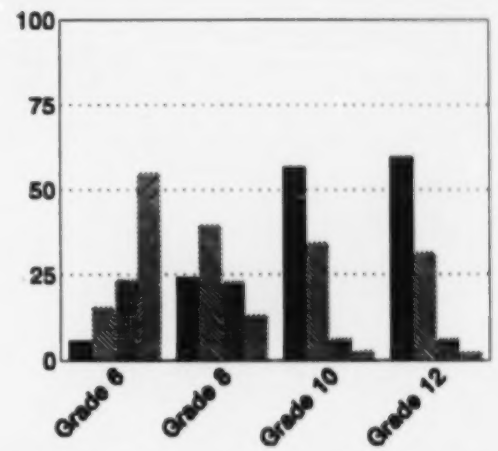
TABLE 13: SELF-REPORTED SUBSTANCE USE DURING SCHOOL DAY 1989 - 1993

	Alcohol			Tobacco			Other Drugs		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Grade 10	7.7	7.6	7.9	18.7	17.9	20.2	8.9	8.0	11.5
Grade 12	8.9	7.1	8.6	22.3	20.9	21.4	10.8	8.7	10.9

Numbers denote percentages.

The increases evident in self-reported use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs during the school day correspond to those perceived by students. While there was a rise in self-reported use of all substances since 1991, only the changes registered for use of other drugs were significant. Tobacco use continues to be more common during the school day than use of alcohol or other drugs. This may help to explain why so few students report having gotten in trouble at school because of drinking or drug use. Figure 8 displays student perceptions of the total number of students at their school who use drugs or alcohol.

Figure 8: Student Perception of How Many Students At Their School Use Drugs/Alcohol



	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
A lot of kids	5.6	24.1	56.6	59.6
Some kids	15.6	39.7	34.4	31.5
A few kids	23.7	23	6.4	6.4
No one	55	13.1	2.7	2.5

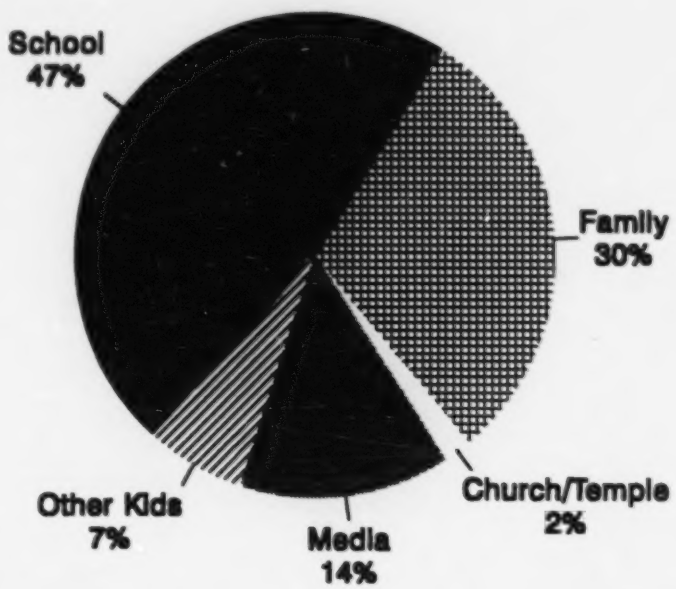
A lot of kids Some kids A few kids No one

Numbers denote percentages.

The percentage of students who believe "a lot of kids" at their school use drugs or alcohol increases dramatically with grade, especially between grade 8 and grade 10.

The majority of Nevada students continue to recognize the role that school can play as a protective factor in their lives. Most believe that drug education should start in the early elementary grades, with the largest proportion in each grade preferring that it start at third grade or lower. Figure 9 displays their response to a survey question which asked them where they had learned the most about the dangers of drugs and drinking.

Figure 9: Source of Most Learning About Drugs and Drinking: Grades 6-12

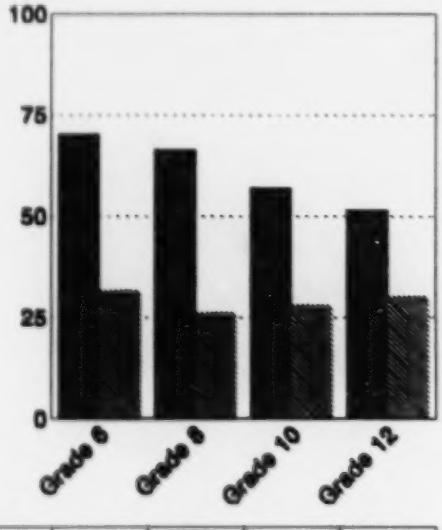


Regardless of grade level, students most frequently identify school as their greatest source of learning about the dangers of drugs and drinking. More than half of sixth graders (56.2%) cite school as their greatest source of information about these dangers. This percentage declines somewhat with grade level, until by grade 12 just over a third (35.4%) hold this belief. This pattern is identical to that on the previous two surveys, but school's influence continues to grow.

The proportion of students who feel that they have learned "a lot" in class about drug types and protective factors (e.g., how to say "no," decision-making skills, healthy alternatives to substance use), diminishes as students advance in grade level. Nearly three-fourths of sixth graders (72.7%) report having learned "a lot" compared with just over a third (37.7%) of twelfth graders.

More than half of sixth and eighth graders (55.2%) indicated that the things they have learned at school have changed their attitude or behavior about drugs or alcohol. Fewer tenth and twelfth graders believed that school has had this influence (40.7% and 38.8%, respectively). Students in grade 8 once again were the most likely to claim that they knew enough about the effects of drugs and alcohol. More than three-quarters of them (76.3%) believed this, compared with approximately two-thirds (69.3%) of their counterparts at the other three grade levels. Student awareness of counseling and support groups at their schools is presented in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Awareness of Substance Abuse Counselors/Support Groups at School



	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
Counselor	70.1	66.4	57	51.6
Support Group	31.7	26.2	28.1	30.3

Counselor Support Group

Numbers denote percentages.

Student awareness of a counselor or other staff member at their school to discuss alcohol or drug-related problems decreases with grade level. This pattern was also apparent on both previous surveys. Almost three-quarters of current sixth

graders (70.1%) believed their school provided a substance abuse counselor, up from 67.7 percent in 1991; yet only 51.6 percent of this year's seniors indicated that this sort of counselor was available to them. That figure was down slightly from the 53.7 percent recorded in 1991.

Student awareness of support groups for students with similar concerns was somewhat more erratic, ranging from a "high" of 30.7 percent at grade 6 to a low of 23.1 percent at grade 10. Despite the presumed proliferation of student assistance programs throughout the state, with the exception of grade 6, awareness of support groups was down since 1991, and it is clear that the majority of students across all grade levels are still unaware of the presence of these groups.

FAMILY FACTORS

Among the family factors that place adolescents at risk for substance abuse are:

- **Family history of alcoholism**
- **Family management problems**
- **Low/unrealistic parental expectations**
- **Lack of family involvement**
- **Positive family attitudes toward substance use**
- **Use of substances by family members**
- **Antisocial behavior of family members**

Although Nevada students are more likely to identify school than home as their greatest source of learning about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, home is cited more frequently than school as having been influential in changing their attitudes or behavior about drugs and alcohol.

Nearly 1 in every 6 students reports living with someone with a drinking or drug problem. Sixth graders are most likely to indicate this (17.5%), and twelfth graders are least likely to (16.3%). Table 14 presents student perceptions of their parents' feelings about their using substances or attending parties where they are available.

TABLE 14: STUDENT PERCEPTION OF PARENTS' FEELINGS ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE

	Occasional Marijuana		1 or 2 drinks Daily		5+ drinks on weekend		Attending party/drinks	
	Gr.10	Gr.12	Gr.10	Gr.12	Gr.10	Gr.12	Gr.10	Gr.12
Approve	1.6	2.2	1.2	1.5	1.6	2.1	4.0	6.8
Wouldn't Care	4.2	5.6	4.1	4.9	5.0	8.7	17.3	25.2
Disapprove	12.8	13.7	16.2	17.1	16.4	18.9	33.1	32.8
Greatly Disapprove	81.3	78.5	78.5	76.5	77.1	70.3	45.6	35.1

Numbers denote percentages.

Almost 95 percent of students in grades 10 and 12 believe their parents would "disapprove" or "greatly disapprove" of their smoking marijuana or having one or two drinks nearly every day. Somewhat more permissive attitudes were perceived regarding students having five or more drinks once or twice each weekend and especially toward their attending a party in a private home where alcoholic beverages were available.

A significant relationship was apparent between perceived parental attitudes and student self-reported use of marijuana and alcohol, but only if students believed their parents would "strongly disapprove" of a behavior did it make them less likely to engage in the behavior than the average student at their grade level.

Parental attitudes (as perceived by students) have shifted somewhat from the last administration of the survey. Attitudes toward marijuana use have softened, (significantly at grade 12), while those toward alcohol have become more restrictive. These changes correspond closely with the changes in self-reported student use of marijuana and alcohol and underscore the influence of the family.

Younger students are more likely than older ones to get their alcohol from home. Sixth graders who drink indicate that they most frequently get their alcoholic beverages from home with parental knowledge. Eighth graders also cite home as a frequent source of alcoholic beverages, but a growing percentage say that their parents are unaware. Younger students also appear to be less likely to get into trouble at home because of their drinking or drug use. Only 20 percent of sixth grade substance users had ever gotten into trouble at home compared with 32 percent of high school seniors.

COMMUNITY FACTORS

Among the community factors that increase the risk of substance use/abuse are:

- **Lack of community involvement**
- **Availability of substances**
- **Community norms favorable to substance use**
- **Lack of relationships with significant adults in the community**
- **Lack of employment opportunities**

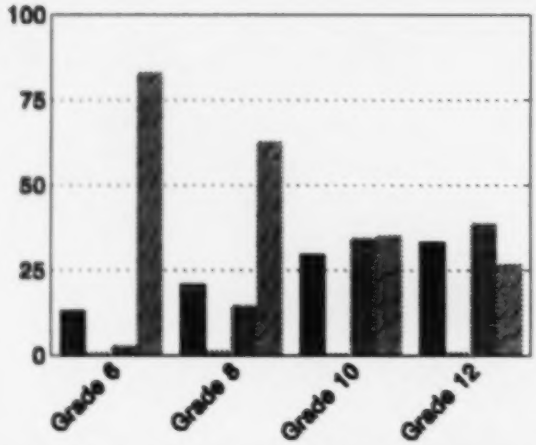
Student participation in nonschool activities is highest at grade 6 (67.3%) and lowest at grade 10 (57.1%). The pattern of students who report the community as the greatest source of drug or alcohol information is almost the reverse: only 11.3 percent of 6th graders indicate that the community has taught them the most about the dangers of drugs and drinking, but by 12th grade the figure has increased to 24.5 percent. Grade level makes less difference in students' beliefs regarding the effect the community has had on their attitudes or behavior about alcohol and drugs--almost half of all students believe the community has been influential. Sixth and eighth graders see it as less influential than either home or school, while tenth and twelfth graders see it as more influential than school but less influential than home.

Fifty-one percent of 6th graders believe that there is drug or alcohol use off campus by students from their school during the school day. This figure is up significantly from the 42 percent recorded in 1991. By grade 12, the percentage

of students reporting off-campus drug or alcohol use has jumped to 93 percent, slightly above the 92.5 percent reported in 1991. Nevertheless, the percentages of students who admit to having been in trouble with the law or in treatment for substance abuse remain relatively low. Only 7.3 percent of 10th graders and 9.8 percent of 12th graders claim to have been in trouble with the law because of their drinking or drug use, while 4.9 percent of 10th graders and 6.2 percent of 12th graders say they have been in treatment for substance abuse.

As students move into senior high school, an increasing number report that they are able to purchase alcoholic beverages themselves or that they get adults to purchase alcohol for them. The percentages of students who indicate this, however, have continued to decline. Only 10.9 percent of current tenth graders report that they are able to obtain their alcoholic beverages in the community, down from 11.1 percent last year; and while 16.8 percent of twelfth graders say they buy alcoholic beverages themselves or ask adults to purchase them, that figure has dropped from the 18.8 percent recorded in 1991. Figure 11 reports the percentage of students who attend parties in the community where there is drinking or drug use.

Figure 11: Percentage Students Reporting Drinking or Drug Use at Parties Attended



	Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
Alcohol	13	20.9	29.6	33.3
Drugs	0.8	1.4	0.5	0.9
Both	3	14.8	34.6	38.9
None	83.1	62.9	35.3	26.9

Alcohol Drugs Both None

Numbers denote percentages.

Attendance at parties where there is drinking or drug use also increases with grade level. At grade six, 16.8 percent of students report that these activities occur at the parties they attend, up slightly from the 15.1 percent that was recorded in 1991. By grade 12, almost three out of four students (73.1%) admit that drinking and drug use occur at the parties they attend; however, that represents a significant decline from the 77.1 percent who reported this activity in 1991. Significant declines in the percentages of students reporting attendance at parties where there is drinking and drug use were noted at grades 8 and 10, as well. Eighth grade dropped from 41.9 percent to 37.1 percent this year, while tenth grade decreased from 69.9 percent to 64.7 percent.

FINDINGS

Major findings are presented in terms of the five previously addressed risk/resiliency factors: individual, peer, school, family, and community. Comparative data appear in boldface print.

Individual Factors

Alcohol Use

- Alcohol continues to be the major drug of choice for students at all grade levels in Nevada. Even at grade six, 39.2 percent of students report having consumed beer, wine, or hard liquor at least once in their lifetime. This figure climbs to 65.7 percent by grade eight, to 78.6 percent by grade ten, and reaches 80.1 percent by grade twelve.

- **Comparison of this year's aggregated "alcohol use" category (beer, wine, or hard liquor) with that from the 1991 survey shows that the percentage of students reporting lifetime use of alcohol has declined at every grade level surveyed. Decreases were significant at grades six and ten.**

	1991	1993	Difference
· 6th grade	42.9	39.2	- 3.7
· 8th grade	66.3	65.7	- 0.6
· 10th grade	81.4	78.6	- 2.8
· 12th grade	82.6	80.1	- 2.5

- **Self-reported use of three specific forms of alcohol (beer, wine, and hard liquor) also registered significant declines. Lifetime use of beer dropped significantly at all four grade levels. Wine use, which decreased at all levels, posted significant declines at grades 6, 10, and 12. Use of hard liquor was down significantly at grades 6 and 12, remained unchanged at grade 8, and dropped slightly at grade 10.**

- **Since the 1991 survey, more students at grades 6, 8, and 12 report having had their first full drink at a later age; the reverse was true for 10th graders.**

Tobacco Use

- Tobacco use is far less prevalent among Nevada students than use of alcohol; however approximately 12.9 percent of sixth graders report at least experimental use of tobacco. By twelfth grade, just over 50 percent of students report that they have tried tobacco.

- **Smoking continues to be far more popular than chewing tobacco. Over the past two years its popularity has dropped slightly at grade 6 but increased at the other three grade levels--significantly at grade 8.**

Use of Other Gateway Drugs

- Only 3 percent of Nevada's sixth graders have ever tried marijuana but by senior year nearly 37 percent report experimentation.
- **Lifetime use of marijuana has increased at all four grade levels since 1991--significantly at grades 6, 8, and 10.**
- Regular use of marijuana is less common than experimentation. Even at twelfth grade, only 16 percent of students report that they use it monthly, weekly, or daily.
- **Regular use of marijuana has increased significantly at grades 8, 10, and 12 and risen slightly at grade 6.**
- **Since the 1991 survey, the proportion of 10th and 12th graders who believe there is moderate or great risk in occasional marijuana use has dropped significantly.**
- Cocaine experimentation, including use of crack, is fairly rare among Nevada students, and regular use is quite uncommon. Even at grade 12, only 7 percent of students have tried cocaine.
- **Since 1991, slight increases in cocaine experimentation are evident at grades 6, 8, and 10, while a small decrease is apparent at grade 12.**

Use of Other Drugs

- Experimentation with other drugs, which include opiates, depressants, tranquilizers, hallucinogens, inhaled substances, stimulants, steroids, and over-the-counter drugs to get high, is more prevalent than use of the gateway drugs marijuana and cocaine at grades 6 and 8 but is less common than gateway drug use at grades 10 and 12.
- **Use of inhalants (like glue, aerosols, and solvents) rose significantly at all four grade levels. Significant increases also were noted in the use of hallucinogens (LSD, PCP, magic mushrooms) at grade 8 and stimulants (amphetamines, dexedrine, speed) at grades 8, 10, and 12.**

Peer Factors

- There is a tendency among students at grades 8, 10, and 12 to attribute more alcohol, tobacco, and drug use to their friends than they report for themselves. This is true only for tobacco and other drugs at grade 6.

- Peer influence is strongest at grades 8, 10, and 12: the greater the frequency of perceived use among friends, the more likely students are to self-report use.

- Friends become the primary source of alcohol and an increasingly greater source of information about drinking and drugs as students move into grades 10 and 12.

- Positive involvement with peers in school and community activities appears to serve a protective function for students in grades 8, 10, and 12. Active students are less likely to report lifetime substance use than non-participants.

School Factors

- By high school, more than three-fourths of students believe there is alcohol or drug use on their campus by students during the school day.

- **The percentage of students who report that students are using alcohol or drugs on their campus has increased at every grade level since the 1991 survey. Increases were significant at grades 6, 8, and 10.**

- **Self-reported use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs by 10th and 12th graders during the school day has increased since 1991. The only significant change registered was for other drug use.**

- Students are aware of the role that school can play as a protective factor in their lives and believe that drug education should start in the early elementary grades.

- **The percentage of students who identify school as their greatest source of learning about the dangers of drugs and drinking has increased significantly since the last survey.**

- Student awareness of a counselor or other staff member at their school to discuss alcohol or drug-related problems decreases with grade level. This pattern was also apparent on both previous surveys.

- **Since 1991, awareness of substance abuse counselors has increased at grades 6, 8, and 10 but decreased at grade 12.**

- Fewer than a third of students report that they are aware of a student support group at their school to deal with alcohol or other drug concerns.

- **Awareness of student support groups is up at grades 6 and 8 but down at grades 10 and 12. The majority of students are still unaware of the presence of such groups on school campuses.**

Family Factors

- Approximately 1 out of every 6 students reports living with someone with a drinking or drug problem.

- Most sixth graders who drink report getting their alcoholic beverages from home, most frequently with parental knowledge.

- Students perceive of their parents as disapproving of marijuana use and regular or heavy drinking, but they report somewhat more lenient attitudes regarding their attending private parties where alcohol is available.

- **Parental attitudes toward substance use (as perceived by students) have shifted somewhat since the 1991 survey. Attitudes toward marijuana use have become more permissive (significantly so at grade 12), while those toward alcohol use have become more restrictive.**

Community Factors

- Nearly three out of every four high school students report that they attend parties in the community where there is drinking or drug use.

- **Declining percentages of students who report attending parties where there is drinking or drug use are apparent at grades 8, 10, and 12. The most significant decline was registered at grade 8, where 37.1 percent of current students said they attended such parties, compared with 41.9 percent in 1991. Smaller declines were seen at grades 10 and 12, and a nonsignificant increase occurred at grade 6.**

TRENDS IN SUBSTANCE USE AMONG NEVADA STUDENTS
PERCENTAGE BY GRADE

	Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Smoking Tobacco												
Never	87.6	89.9	91.0	71.0	71.0	68.2	59.3	57.4	56.7	50.7	55.2	54.8
Some	10.5	8.1	6.8	19.2	18.8	20.0	23.2	23.6	23.0	26.7	23.1	24.6
Monthly	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.1	2.6	3.6	3.2	4.6	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.6
Weekly	0.5	0.4	0.6	1.6	2.3	2.2	2.1	3.4	3.2	2.7	3.9	3.0
Daily	0.6	0.6	0.6	5.0	5.3	6.0	12.2	11.0	13.6	16.1	14.0	14.1
Chewing Tobacco												
Never	91.6	93.7	94.9	85.3	86.7	87.4	78.7	78.2	80.6	72.3	78.9	76.7
Some	7.4	5.4	3.9	11.2	10.2	9.8	14.8	15.8	13.9	18.8	14.9	15.8
Monthly	0.4	0.4	0.5	1.4	1.5	1.1	2.0	2.5	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.7
Weekly	0.3	0.2	0.4	1.0	0.8	0.8	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.0	1.5
Daily	0.3	0.4	0.3	1.2	0.8	1.0	3.0	1.9	2.1	5.4	3.2	3.2
Beer												
Never	63.2	68.1	73.9	41.7	44.8	48.4	27.0	28.2	32.9	19.4	25.6	30.1
Some	33.2	28.6	23.9	42.9	41.4	39.4	39.7	41.5	40.5	35.2	36.3	36.1
Monthly	2.1	2.3	1.4	9.6	8.6	7.4	17.5	16.4	16.1	21.9	19.0	17.5
Weekly	1.1	0.7	0.6	5.0	4.6	3.9	14.2	12.3	9.4	21.4	17.6	15.1
Daily	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.6	1.6	1.1	2.4	1.6	1.3
Wine												
Never	62.1	67.0	69.9	38.7	42.7	43.5	25.8	26.8	31.5	19.4	26.4	30.0
Some	34.2	29.3	27.4	46.0	42.7	44.7	45.0	46.8	48.0	43.5	44.5	47.2
Monthly	2.3	2.4	1.9	10.0	9.7	8.1	19.3	18.6	15.1	25.9	20.3	17.1
Weekly	1.1	0.9	0.4	4.3	4.0	2.9	8.7	7.1	4.9	10.4	8.3	5.4
Daily	0.3	0.4	0.4	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.4
Hard Liquor												
Never	85.3	87.3	89.4	61.2	62.3	62.3	38.9	41.0	42.2	28.5	33.8	38.4
Some	12.7	11.0	9.6	28.4	28.7	28.5	39.4	37.2	39.6	45.2	41.8	40.3
Monthly	1.3	1.2	0.7	6.7	5.9	6.1	13.8	15.2	12.6	18.7	16.9	15.6
Weekly	0.5	0.3	0.2	3.1	2.7	2.7	6.9	5.8	4.9	6.2	6.9	5.0
Daily	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.7

	Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Marijuana												
Never	96.1	97.7	96.7	85.1	88.3	83.5	69.3	71.2	66.0	55.7	63.4	63.3
Some	3.2	2.0	2.6	9.8	7.9	9.3	18.1	16.5	17.9	27.3	22.6	20.3
Monthly	0.3	0.1	0.4	2.5	1.9	3.1	5.7	5.9	6.1	7.0	6.7	7.1
Weekly	0.3	0.1	0.2	1.6	1.2	2.8	4.1	4.1	6.6	5.4	4.4	4.8
Daily	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.9	0.6	1.2	2.7	2.3	3.4	4.6	2.9	4.5
Cocaine												
Never	98.9	99.0	98.5	96.2	97.1	96.7	91.6	94.9	94.6	84.5	91.1	92.8
Some	0.7	0.7	1.1	2.7	2.2	2.4	5.7	4.2	3.6	10.9	6.3	5.4
Monthly	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.6	1.3	0.6	1.0	2.7	1.6	1.3
Weekly	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.9	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.6	0.3
Daily	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.2
Opiates												
Never	98.4	98.8	98.9	96.0	97.1	96.9	93.0	94.5	94.5	91.4	93.1	93.0
Some	1.4	0.8	0.9	3.1	2.3	2.9	5.4	4.7	4.3	7.6	5.6	6.1
Monthly	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.5
Weekly	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.1
Daily	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2
Depressants												
Never	98.5	98.6	98.8	94.7	96.3	95.4	93.0	93.4	93.5	93.3	94.0	94.2
Some	1.1	1.0	1.0	4.0	2.9	3.9	5.3	4.9	5.3	5.4	5.1	4.9
Monthly	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.2	1.2	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5
Weekly	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.2
Daily	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2
Tranquilizers												
Never	98.2	98.7	98.6	95.3	95.9	96.1	92.8	93.6	93.7	91.7	93.3	93.1
Some	1.5	0.9	1.1	3.8	3.2	3.4	5.7	5.6	5.0	7.1	5.6	5.8
Monthly	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.3	1.0	0.6	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.8
Weekly	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1
Daily	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2

	Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
Hallucinogens												
Never	98.5	98.9	98.3	95.6	95.7	93.9	89.7	88.2	87.2	86.4	84.7	84.5
Some	1.1	1.0	1.1	3.0	2.9	4.5	6.9	7.8	8.0	9.7	9.9	10.0
Monthly	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.7	2.3	2.3	3.2	2.6	3.6	3.8
Weekly	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.7	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.4
Daily	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.3
Inhalants												
Never	96.4	97.1	95.2	90.1	89.8	84.8	85.8	85.0	80.8	86.1	88.0	85.5
Some	2.9	2.5	4.0	7.6	7.8	11.7	11.1	12.1	14.9	11.7	10.5	12.4
Monthly	0.4	0.3	0.3	1.3	1.1	2.1	2.0	1.6	2.5	1.2	0.9	1.6
Weekly	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.3	0.6	0.4	0.4
Daily	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.1
Stimulants												
Never	98.9	98.9	98.8	94.3	96.4	93.8	86.0	90.3	88.2	79.8	87.9	86.1
Some	0.8	0.8	1.0	3.9	2.4	4.6	9.0	6.7	7.2	13.3	9.2	8.3
Monthly	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.1	0.7	1.0	2.4	2.2	2.6	4.1	2.1	3.4
Weekly	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.3	1.6	0.6	1.4	2.0	0.7	1.5
Daily	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.1	0.7
Steroids												
Never	98.0	98.6	97.9	97.1	97.6	97.6	96.9	97.2	97.5	96.2	96.5	97.1
Some	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.8	2.0	1.6	2.5	2.6	2.1
Monthly	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.3
Weekly	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2
Daily	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3
Over-the-Counter-Drugs to feel high												
Never	96.7	97.4	97.2	91.8	92.8	91.6	88.2	88.9	88.9	88.5	89.9	89.9
Some	2.5	2.0	2.2	6.2	5.7	6.6	9.4	8.9	8.5	9.6	8.5	8.4
Monthly	0.4	0.3	0.3	1.0	0.7	1.1	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.0	1.0
Weekly	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.5
Daily	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.1